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Fall 9-1-2001

### LS 356.80: Studies in Literature and Other Disciplines - Doctors' Stories

Herbert M. Swick

*University of Montana - Missoula*

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## **SYLLABUS**

### **DOCTORS' STORIES ENLT 325.80 and LS 356.80**

**Davidson Honors College  
Autumn Semester 2001**

#### **Course Information**

Instructor: Herbert M. Swick, M.D.

Main Office: Institute of Medicine and Humanities, Saint Patrick Hospital  
Campus Office: LA 216

Phone numbers: main office: 329-5661  
campus office: 243-2762

E-mail address: swick@saintpatrick.org

Office hours: Tuesdays 8.30 – 9.30 AM  
Thursdays 11.00 AM – 12.00 noon  
or by appointment

#### **Required Texts:**

Richard Selzer: The Doctor Stories  
Richard Selzer: Raising the Dead  
Abraham Verghese: My Own Country  
William Carlos Williams: The Doctor Stories

FacPac

## **Grading:**

Evaluation in this course will be based upon:

- written assignments (60 %). Four papers will be required:
  - (1) An illness narrative. Paper due by end of class on September 20. (10 %)
  - (2) Analysis of a selected work. Paper due by end of class on October 18. (15 %)
  - (3) Analysis of a course theme. Paper due by end of class on November 15. (15%)
  - (4) Final exam. Paper due by 5.00 PM on Tuesday, December 18. (20 %)
- class participation (30 %). Because this course employs a seminar-discussion format, all students will be expected to participate actively in class discussions. The success of the course will depend on a free and vigorous, challenging and provocative exchange of ideas among the students and the instructor (who is a student, simply a few miles farther along the road). In discussing any literary work, remember that there is no single “right answer.”
- class presentation (10 %). In addition to ongoing contributions during class, every student will have the opportunity to assume primary responsibility for leading the discussion of one or more of the assigned readings during the course.

## **Course Schedule and Reading Assignments**

Abbreviations: FP = FacPac

RS = Richard Selzer: Doctor Stories

WCW = William Carlos Williams: The Doctor Stories

### **THE LANGUAGE OF MEDICINE**

9/4: The Narrative Structure of Medicine

Clif Cleaveland: Joker Wild (FP)

Clif Cleaveland: Alicia's Journal (FP)

9/6: The Language of Patients and Physicians – 1

Richard Selzer: Imagine a Woman (RS)

John Stone: The Wolf Inside (FP)

9/11: The Language of Patients and Physicians – 2

Rafael Campo: Ten Patients, and Another (FP)

William Hoskin: Neurology Rounds (FP)

Perri Klass: Learning the Language (FP)

### **FACETS OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE: BIRTH AND DEATH, ILLNESS AND HEALING**

#### **The Impact of Illness**

9/13: Perspectives on Illness

Dannie Abse: Alzheimer's (FP)

Dannie Abse: Child Drawing in a Hospital Bed (FP)

Richard Selzer: Raccoon (RS)

William Carlos Williams: The Centenarian (FP)

William Carlos Williams: The Raper from Passenack (FP)

William Carlos Williams: To Waken an Old Lady (FP)

9/18: A Personal Chronicle of Illness and Healing – 1

Richard Selzer: Raising the Dead – Parts 1 and 2

9/20: A Personal Chronicle of Illness and Healing - 2

Richard Selzer: Raising the Dead – Parts 3 and 4

- 9/25: The Impact of Illness on Caregivers  
Eugene Hirsch: He (FP)  
Richard Selzer: Tube Feeding (RS)  
Richard Selzer: Witness (RS)  
Abraham Verghese: Johnson City, and the story of Vickie and  
Gordon McCray. My Own Country, pps. 9-15 (Ch.1), and  
pps. 105-111, 114-116 (Ch. 7)  
William Carlos Williams: Danse Pseudomacabre (WCW)

### **Childbirth**

- 9/27: Experiences of Childbirth – 1  
Dannie Abse: The smile was (FP)  
William Carlos Williams: The Birth (WCW)  
William Carlos Williams: A Maternity Case (FP)
- 10/2: Experiences of Childbirth – 2  
Arthur Conan Doyle: The Curse of Eve (FP)  
William Carlos Williams: Comedy Entombed: 1930 (WCW)  
William Carlos Williams: A Night in June (WCW)

### **Death and Dying**

- 10/4: The Impact of Death  
Dannie Abse: In Llandough Hospital (FP)  
Rafael Campo: The 10,000<sup>th</sup> AIDS Death in San Francisco (FP)  
Jack Coulehan: The Six Hundred Pound Man (FP)  
John Stone: Autopsy in the Form of an Elegy (FP)  
John Stone: Death (FP)  
John Stone: Talking to the Family (FP)  
William Carlos Williams: Death (FP)  
William Carlos Williams: The Last Words of My English  
Grandmother (FP)
- 10/9: Perspectives on Dying  
Anton Chekhov: Ward 6 (FP)  
John Stone: Angor Animi (FP)  
Abraham Verghese: the story of Norman Sanger. My Own Country,  
Chs. 21 and 25

### **Grief**

- 10/11: Grief: A Transcendent Experience - 1  
Arthur Conan Doyle: Sweethearts (FP)  
John Stone: Forecast (FP)  
Richard Selzer: Tom and Lily (RS)

10/16: Grief: A Transcendent Experience – 2

Anton Chekhov: Grief (FP)

Richard Selzer: Wither Thou Goest (RS)

John Stone: The Timeless Heart (FP)

10/18: Grief: A Transcendent Experience – 3

Anton Chekhov: Misery (FP)

Jon Mukand: The Son: Returning Home (FP)

Richard Selzer: Avalanche (RS)

William Carlos Williams: The Widow's Lament in Springtime (FP)

## **THE WOUNDED HEALER: PHYSICIANS AND PATIENTS**

### **Becoming a Physician**

10/23: Student Experiences – 1

Dannie Abse: Carnal Knowledge (FP)

Clif Cleaveland: The Girl in the Glass Box (FP)

Jack Coulehan: Alabama (FP)

Perri Klass: Crying in the Hospital (FP)

Perri Klass: A Textbook Pregnancy (FP)

10/25: Student Experiences – 2

Arthur Conan Doyle: His First Operation (FP)

Perri Klass: "Who Knows This Patient?" (FP)

Susan Mates: Ambulance (FP)

Jon Mukand: First Payment (FP)

Richard Selzer: Sarcophagus (RS)

10/30: Casualties

Stewart Massad: Casualties (FP)

11/1: Comedies

Arthur Conan Doyle: The Los Amigos Fiasco (FP)

Oliver Wendell Holmes: The Stethoscope Song (FP)

Perri Klass: A Weekend in the Life (FP)

William Carlos Williams: French Hospital (FP)

William Carlos Williams: Hell's Kitchen (FP)

## **Patients and Physicians**

### 11/6: Patient physician relationships – 1

Rafael Campo: The Good Doctor (FP)  
Anton Chekhov: The Objet d'Art (FP)  
Richard Selzer: Mercy (RS)  
Richard Selzer: Toenails (FP)  
Marc Straus: A Pause (FP)  
Abraham Verghese: the story of Gordo and Essie Vines.  
My Own Country, Chs. 5 and 8  
William Carlos Williams: The Girl with the Pimple Face (WCW)

### 11/8: Patient physician relationships – 2

Dannie Abse: Case History (FP)  
Dannie Abse: The Doctor (FP)  
Richard Selzer: Brute (RS)  
John Stone: An Infected Heart (FP)  
John Stone: The Long House Call (FP)  
Abraham Verghese: the story of Will and Bess Johnson. My Own  
Country, pps. 188-190 and 192-202 (Ch. 15), pps. 212-218 (Ch. 16),  
pps. 231-239 (Ch. 17), pps. 288-293 (Ch. 24), pps. 308-313 (Ch. 27),  
and pps. 330-333 (Ch. 29).  
William Carlos Williams: A Face of Stone (WCW)

### 11/13: Gentility

William Carlos Williams: Ancient Gentility (WCW)  
William Carlos Williams: Christmas Day: Bronx Zoo (FP)  
William Carlos Williams: Complaint (FP)

### 11/15: Vignettes of Practice

Arthur Conan Doyle: The Doctors of Hoyland (FP)  
Susan Mates: Laundry (FP)  
Richard Selzer: Fetishes (RS)  
William Carlos Williams: The Thing (FP)

### 11/20: Dr. Swick out of town – Reading Day (no class)

### 11/22: Thanksgiving – no class

## **The Wounded Healer**

### 11/27: Doctors are People, Too – 1

Dannie Abse: X-Ray (FP)  
Perri Klass: Baby Poop (FP)  
Richard Selzer: Imelda (RS)  
William Carlos Williams: The Use of Force (WCW)

11/29: Doctors are People, Too – 2

Rafael Campo: What the Body Told (FP)

Susan Mates: The Good Doctor (FP)

Richard Selzer: Semiprivate, Female (RS)

12/4: The Ravages of Practice

Stewart Massad: The Veteran (FP)

Susan Mates: These Days (FP)

William Carlos Williams: Old Doc Rivers (WCW)

12/6: Glimpses into Practice

Clif Cleaveland: Aurora Borealis (FP)

Richard Selzer: Pages from a Wound Dresser's Diary (RS)

Richard Selzer: A Worm from my Notebook (RS)

William Carlos Williams: Le Medecin Malgre Lui (WCW)

12/11: Healing the Wounds

Dannie Abse: Pathology of Colours (FP)

Dannie Abse: The Stethoscope (FP)

Stacy Keen: Chromatic (FP)

William Carlos Williams: Of Medicine and Poetry (FP)

William Carlos Williams: The Practice (WCW)

12/13: A Song for Pythagoras

Dannie Abse: Song for Pythagoras (FP)

John Stone: Gaudeamus Igitur: A Valediction (FP)